



## **News for Immediate Release**

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### **DWR Co-Sponsors Levee Vegetation Conference**

SACRAMENTO - The Department of Water Resources (DWR) will co-sponsor a scientific symposium to address impacts of proposed changes requiring vegetation removal from Central Valley levees. The two day "The Vegetation Challenge" conference will be held at the Sacramento Convention Center Aug. 28-29 at 8 a.m.

"Under Gov. Schwarzenegger's leadership and with voter passage of Proposition 1E, we are making enormous strides to improve flood protection," said DWR Director Lester Snow. "But now we are working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to adapt its new levee maintenance policies to our unique ecosystem and environmental assets, while ensuring public safety."

A new policy by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) requires levees, including 1,600 miles of California levees, to be cleared of vegetation for inspection, repair and to maintain channel capacity. The policy is largely based on conditions that exist in other parts of the country, where ample wildlife habitat exists between levees and the water's edge.

In California, levees were designed to create high water velocities to flush mining debris out of rivers. Most areas have little space between levees and the water, and the existing vegetation on levees provide the only riverside habitat.

The symposium, sponsored by DWR, the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA), the Corps, and the Reclamation Board will bring together distinguished scholars, engineers, and policy makers at the federal, state and local levels to examine the science, review on-the-ground local case studies and discuss policy issues related to this topic.

The agenda and detailed list of scheduled speakers can be found on the SAFCA Web site: [www.safca.org](http://www.safca.org).

*The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.*

Contact the DWR Public Affairs Office for more information about DWR's water activities.